

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3 are currently pending in the instant application. Claims 1 and 3 are independent. Claims 1 and 3 are presented to the Examiner for further prosecution on the merits.

A. Introduction

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,216,321 to Kawamura et al. ("the Kawamura et al. reference"), and rejected claims 1 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Application Publication No. 6,036,710 to Makoto ("the Makoto reference").

B. Interview Summary

The personal interview held with the Examiner on October 13, 2004, is gratefully acknowledged. The courtesy and cooperative spirit shown by the Examiner is greatly appreciated. The interview was directed to claims 1 and 3, and the Kawamura et al. reference and the Makoto reference. Reciting the transmission ratio in mean-plus-function format was discussed, and believed to still be insufficient to structurally define the present invention over the applied art. The Examiner indicated some limitation regarding the respective thickness of the central and peripheral region would be more appropriate. The present amendments to the claims are believed to address these issues. The indication that the Examiner would enter and consider an amendment filed at this stage, in accordance with MPEP § 706.07(b), is also gratefully acknowledged.

C. Synopsis of Claimed Invention

Both claims 1 and 3 recite that a glass having the outer and inner surfaces has "a first thickness in a central area of the panel and a second thickness in the peripheral areas of the panel, a ratio of the first thickness to the second thickness providing a ratio of transmission in the peripheral areas to that of the central area of 60% or more." As noted, for example, on page 8, lines 14-22 of the original specification, since the panel is thicker in the peripheral areas than in the central areas, luminance in the peripheral areas is reduced relative to the central areas. In order to solve this problem, an embodiment of the present invention forms the panel of a glass having a transmission *ratio*, i.e., a ratio of transmission in the peripheral areas to that of the central areas, of 60% or higher. Since there is a limit on how transmissive glass of a certain thickness can be, this may involve sacrificing some brightness in the central areas to gain uniformity, or limiting the amount of curvature on the inner surface.

D. Asserted Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) Over the Kawamura et al. Reference

The rejection of claims 1 and 3 as being anticipated by the Kawamura et al. reference is respectfully traversed for at least the reasons set forth below.

In addressing the limitation regarding the transmission ratio in the outstanding Office action, the Examiner asserted:

As to the newly added functional limitation “a glass having a transmission ratio of 60% or more,” is narrative in form and therefore does not carry any patentable weight.

Office action of September 23, 2004, at p. 3.

There is no disclosure or suggestion in the Kawamura et al. reference that this thickness presents any problems or to providing a transmission ratio of 60% or more. It is respectfully submitted that such a transmission ratio is not inherent in the use of glass for the panel. It is also respectfully submitted that the relative thicknesses now recited in claims 1 and 3 are clearly structural limitations, these structural limitations must be afforded weight, and are not disclosed or suggested by the Kawamura et al. reference.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the Kawamura et al. reference fails to disclose or suggest the present invention as recited in claims 1 and 3, and it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

E. Asserted Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) Over the Makoto Reference

The rejection of claims 1 and 3 as being anticipated by the Makoto reference is respectfully traversed for at least the reasons set forth below. The Examiner applied the same reasoning in addressing the transmission ratio limitation as discussed above in connection with the rejection over the Kawamura et al. reference.

As clarified by the Synopsis above, the claimed transmission ratio is not the same as the inherent transmission rate of the glass, but is controlled across the panel to make the brightness of the image more uniform.

In contrast, the Makoto reference discloses improving flatness and reducing glare by forming the front face of a display into a concave structure. While the resulting faceplate appears to be thicker in the peripheral portion than in the central portion thereof, there is apparently no disclosure or suggestion in the Makoto reference that this thickness presents any problems or the relationship between the thicknesses of the central and peripheral portions regarding a transmission ratio of 60% or more. It is respectfully submitted that such a transmission ratio is not inherent in the use of glass for the panel. It is also respectfully submitted that the relative thicknesses now recited in claims 1 and 3 are clearly structural

limitations, these structural limitations must be afforded weight, and are not disclosed or suggested by the Makoto reference.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the Makoto reference fails to disclose or suggest the present invention as recited in claims 1 and 3, and it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

F. Conclusion

Since the cited prior art references relied upon by the Examiner in rejecting the claims neither anticipate nor render obvious the subject invention as presently claimed, applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 3 are now in condition for allowance, and a notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

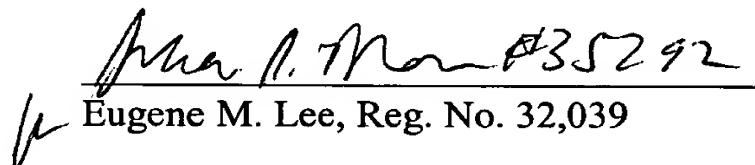
If the Examiner believes that additional discussions or information might advance the prosecution of the instant application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below to expedite resolution of any outstanding issues.

In view of the foregoing remarks, reconsideration of this application is earnestly solicited, and an early and favorable further action upon claims 1 and 3 is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

LEE & STERBA, P.C.

Date: December 23, 2004


Eugene M. Lee, Reg. No. 32,039

LEE & STERBA, P.C.
1101 WILSON BOULEVARD, SUITE 2000
ARLINGTON, VA 22209
703.525.0978 TEL
703.525.4265 FAX

PETITION and
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT CHARGE AUTHORIZATION

This document and any concurrently filed papers are believed to be timely. Should any extension of the term be required, applicant hereby petitions the Director for such extension and requests that any applicable petition fee be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.

If fee payment is enclosed, this amount is believed to be correct. However, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.

Any additional fee(s) necessary to effect the proper and timely filing of the accompanying-papers may also be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.